

STANDISH ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SRNCD)
STUDY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2015, 11:00 A.M.
TOWN HALL – GREAT ROOM

MINUTES

Study Committee present: Catherine Johnson, Naomi Cameron, Helen Robertson

Also present: Thomas Ahern, Jaclyn Harris, Pamela Martin

1. Call to Order

Ms. Johnson called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

2. Public Comments

Citizens initiated discussion of the Study Committee, transparency relative to posted minutes, scheduling of meetings and how views of non-signers might be reflected in the final report.

In response to these questions, the Study Committee outlined the process: collection of signatures to initiate the Study Committee, a public meeting, naming of members by Town boards and the neighborhood, and that the Study Committee is tasked with writing the report and submitting it to the Historical Commission. All meeting schedules will be posted to the Town website at least 2 business days prior to the meetings; all minutes must be approved by the Committee at a subsequent meeting and will be posted after approval. Also, after the Study report is complete, the process will include a joint hearing by the Historical Commission and the Planning Board that could lead to bringing a warrant to Advisory and Town Meeting. There was clarification that the current work will not be ready for this spring's [2015] Annual Town Meeting.

There were views expressed by the public that they would like the composition of the Study Committee changed, perhaps adding an alternate member not in favor of an NCD or creating a larger community council.

In response to this suggestion, the Study Committee outlined a neighborhood-wide information session discussed at the February 24 meeting that is being planned with a presentation from residents of the Denton Road NCD.

There was additional discussion defining a “neighborhood” for NCD purposes and stating that a district is a construct that is distinct from a natural real estate area and also as distinct from zoning. Also, the Study Committee reminded everyone that Wellesley's Bylaws are unique, allowing an “opt-out” for residents of the area as compared to NCDs without that provision in other municipalities.

3. New and Other Business

Minutes: The minutes of the February 24, 2015 meeting were approved by unanimous vote of the committee present with two typographical corrections (underlined in approved version).

Informational materials: The information relative to neighborhood history (Royal Barry Wills) has been posted to the website. The information relative to property value data is being prepared. When complete, it also will be posted to the website. Both sets of information will be distributed by hand to the neighborhood.

Editing: The Study Committee members continued the discussion of the next section of the report, which sets out the guidelines for construction, until the next meeting because only three Committee members were present.

Next Meeting: Scheduling of the next meeting will be delayed until the availability of the missing members can be considered.

Other business: The Study Committee will assess at future meetings whether the “neighborhood” map should be shrunk to a core area where there is the most support from contiguous lots, with an eye to the concentration of Royal Barry Wills architecture. The Study Committee will review whether the area can grow as well. Ms. Johnson mentioned that she had conferred with Town Counsel about the timing of participation in the NCD, noting that she was advised that neighbors can sign up or opt out until the warrant is published.

Other business: The Study Committee will assess at future meetings the merits of creating a “community council” of 6 to 12 neighbors, as mentioned during Public Comments, to express all opinions and offer feedback or whether the open meetings, information sessions and public hearing(s) offers appropriate opportunities for input.

4. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:30.

(Chair’s note: revisions are underscored.)